



Students at high schools in school districts in or near nine Army installations will now find it easier to transfer, thanks to an Army-sponsored study of mobile teens.

Washington, D.C.

Agreement Aids Mobile Teens

TRANSFERRING between high schools in school districts surrounding or on nine Army installations may be getting a little easier — thanks to an Army-sponsored study of mobile Army teens.

Participating school systems are Muscogee County Public Schools near Fort Benning, Ga.; El Paso Independent School District near Fort Bliss, Texas; Cumberland County Public Schools near Fort Bragg, N.C.; Killeen Independent School District near Fort Hood, Texas; Clover Park School District No. 400 near Fort Lewis, Wash.; Lawton Public Schools near Fort Sill, Okla.; and Department of Defense School Systems schools at Fort Campbell, Ky.; Baumholder, Germany; and in Korea.

"The agreement among these nine school systems will improve predictability and en-

hance the quality of life for our soldiers and our families. We want to ensure no military child is left behind," said Army Chief of Staff GEN Eric K. Shinseki.

A 1997 Secondary Education Transition Study concluded that Army installations, parents and schools need to work together to ease students' transition problems. Fixes to the majority of these problems are identified in the SETS memorandum of agreement. These include:

- Allowing parents to carry student records from one school system to another.
- Developing virtual orientation tours of schools for posting on school and installation websites.
- Posting information about extracurricular activities on school and installation websites.
- Communicating high school requirements for enhanced or alternate diplomas; options and opportunities for earning graduation credit; information about required state testing; and opportunities avail-

able to senior students in transition.

- Modeling what should be in a student portfolio.
- Including a senior military member from the supported installation as an ex-officio member or adviser to the district school board or council.

The MOA is likely to include many more school districts in the near future, said MAJ Becky Porter, a special assistant for education to the

chief of staff of the Army.

One thing to note, she said, is that the MOA is not between the Army and the school districts; it is an agreement among the districts themselves. Other school districts may join the agreement on a voluntary basis, she added, as long as they join without requirements to change the basic MOA.

While the SETS agreement establishes a framework for the successful transfer of mobile

Hometown News

Soldiers Can Send Holiday Greetings

THE Hometown News Service, buoyed by feedback from the launch of last year's Newspaper Holiday Greetings program, is continuing to build this free service for soldiers and hometown newspapers.

Unlike the broadcast holiday greetings program, which is limited to soldiers serving in certain overseas locations, the Newspaper Holiday Greetings program is open to all soldiers.

"Computer technology enabled extension of the popular radio and television holiday greetings concept to the print media," said Gerry Proctor, Army and Air Force Hometown News Service chief of marketing.

The Newspaper Holiday Greetings program is administered by each soldier's public affairs office. The greeting form is filled out and submitted online by the service member, and the information is transmitted to a Hometown News database to be released to hometown editors.

The entire process is automated from the moment the person filling out the online form clicks the "send" button to the final step, when Hometown News e-mails the greetings to newspaper editors. And because there are no paper forms to fill out or process, there is no limit to the number of greetings Hometown News can process.

Public affairs offices will set up areas for soldiers to fill out the forms, Proctor said.

In addition to having several releases generated from each form, the service member can also input multiple forms.

"You can submit as many greetings as you want," Proctor said. "You can send holiday greetings to your parents, in-laws, brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles and anyone who is a relative, as long as you have their cities, states and zip codes."

Contact your local public affairs office for more information about the program. — *Army, Air Force Hometown News Service*

youths, it does not guarantee it, said Dr. Mary M. Keller, Military Child Education Coalition executive director.

Copies of the SETS executive summary and MOA, and an academic advocacy guide for parents, will be distributed to all Army installation commanders and school liaison of-

fices, Porter said. — *Army News Service*

San Diego, Calif.

Navy Honors Fallen Soldier

THE Navy honored an Army hero when it recently christened

the transport ship USNS *Pomeroy*.

Soldiers from the 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry Regiment, of Fort Drum, N.Y., served as the color guard at the christening at the National Steel and Shipbuilding Company's shipyard in San Diego.

Pomeroy was named for PFC Ralph Pomeroy, a machine-gunner with Company E, 31st Inf. Regt., 7th Inf. Division, in the Korean War. He was awarded the Medal of Honor for heroism on Oct. 15, 1952, in the battle of Triangle Hill.

Pomeroy served on the front line for most of his tour in Korea. He was injured once and was sent to a military hospital for treatment. When he recovered, Pomeroy returned to the front line, where he was killed in action at age 22.

His sisters, Arlene Castle and Nancy Pomeroy, spoke at the event. They described him as a loving, patriotic man, who was always concerned with the well-being of those around him.

Pomeroy was christened in the traditional way, with a champagne bottle broken over her bow. Arlene Castle and Nancy Pomeroy were chosen to do the honors. After the bottle was broken, the last braces holding the ship were released and *Pomeroy* slid into the Pacific Ocean.

The vessel will transport military equipment to potential areas of conflict.

California Congressman Randy Cunningham said *Pomeroy* and her sister ships will be the logistical backbone of the military. They will preposition heavy combat equipment and supplies for the nation's armed forces.

"Just as PFC Pomeroy enabled his platoon to contain the enemy, the USNS *Pomeroy* will be the force behind the force," Cunningham said. "This ship stands as a beacon to Private Pomeroy and his heroism under fire and his ultimate sacrifice for our nation." — *27th Public Affairs Detachment*

Reserve Personnel News

AR-PERSCOM Expands Response Line

THE Army Reserve Personnel Command has just launched two new Interactive Voice Response applications to better answer soldier's questions via the telephone.

Information about the Active Guard Reserve program and promotion boards can be accessed by calling designated IVR lines.

Soldiers can learn about the AGR program, download an application, request an application by mail or check the status of a submitted application by calling the AGR IVR. The IVR also offers assistance on completing the application.

An AGR application packet can be downloaded through the AR-PERSCOM website, www.2xcitizen.usar.army.mil.

Soldiers can call the Promotions IVR to find out if they are eligible for an upcoming mandatory board, and can find out the name, convening and recess date of that board. Soldiers can determine if any education documents are missing from the microfiches sent in with their board packets, and can check the status of board packet mailings and when they should be received.

Soldiers can also determine if they have been selected for promotion, and officers can find out if the promotion consideration file determined if they were educationally qualified. Callers can also be transferred to a standby board specialist.

To use the AGR IVR, call the Full Time Support Management Directorate at (800) 325-4118 or (314) 592-1234; USAR Board Support at (314) 592-0673; or Customer Contact Office at (314) 592-0575.

To use the Promotions IVR, call the new number, (877) 215-9834, or the existing call trees, (314) 592-1200 or (314) 592-1212.

AR-PERSCOM introduced an IVR system for evaluations earlier this year. This phone system enables soldiers and units to check the status of the most recent evaluations. Start date, end date, received date, status and completion date of the most recent evaluations are all provided by calling the Evaluations IVR system, (800) 648-5484. — *ARNEWS*



PFC Ralph Pomeroy's sisters accept a commemorative plaque following the christening of the vessel named for their brother.

SSG Jack Siemieniec



Members of the 3rd Bde., 2nd Inf. Div., display a prototype of the IBCT's Interim Armored Vehicle at the Pentagon.

Washington

Army Selects Next IBCTs

FORTS Richardson and Wainwright, Alaska; Fort Polk, La.; Schofield Barracks, Hawaii; and the Pennsylvania Army National Guard will host the next units selected to transition into Interim Brigade Combat Teams.

The latest brigade selections are conditional on results of an ongoing Army Programmatic Environmental Impact Study, officials said. That study is slated to wrap up in the fall.

Transformation to the IBCT design for the brigades is anticipated to take about one year for an active-component brigade and about two years for an Army National Guard brigade, Army officials said.

The first brigades to transform — the 3rd Brigade of the 2nd Infantry Division and the

1st Bde. of the 25th Inf. Div., both stationed at Fort Lewis, Wash. — started the transition to IBCTs in 1999. They are scheduled to finish the process in fiscal years 2003 and 2004, respectively.

The Army plan is to complete fielding of the Interim Armored Vehicle for the other four brigades within three years after the Fort Lewis brigades are fielded. Once the new fielding dates are set, the Army will announce the planning dates for the other brigades.

"The Interim Brigade Combat Teams are required to fill a recognized operational gap in our current capability to meet commander-in-chief requirements," said Army Chief of Staff GEN Eric K. Shinseki. "These warfighting formations, using off-the-shelf equipment with enhanced technologies, provide the CINC with a greater range of options." — *ARNEWS*

Veterans News

Veterans Augment Funeral Teams

DOD is partnering with veterans service organizations across the country to enhance traditional funeral ceremonies that honor the nation's veterans.

Representatives of the Secretary of Defense, the military services, the Department of Veterans Affairs, veterans service organizations, the National Cemetery Administration, the Funeral Directors Association and other groups met recently for the announcement of the Authorized Provider Partnership Program's July debut.

Charles S. Abell, assistant secretary of defense for force-management policy, said the veterans groups will be asked to augment DOD-provided personnel at military funerals by providing volunteer color guards, rifle detail members, pallbearers and buglers.

The National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2000 authorizes the partnership and states that DOD will provide at least two active, National Guard or Reserve uniformed service members to fold and present a ceremonial U.S. flag to survivors at military funerals.

DOD also provides a military musician — if available — to play "Taps," or the music is rendered via high-quality compact disc. The CDs are part of a kit sent to licensed funeral directors working in association with DOD, veterans service organizations, and all active and reserve-component military units conducting funerals. Almost 450,000 active-duty and reserve-component service members participated in military funeral details in 2000.

"What we have now is a formal program in which veterans service organizations can be trained by the local installation commander ... to ensure that the quality of the honors rendered are to standard and that the funeral honors rendered in any particular place around the nation will be the same," Abell said.

Installation commanders will train and certify volunteers, Abell said. The volunteers, he added, are eligible for reimbursement of their travel expenses, such as gas and meals associated with their ceremonial duties.

DOD officials note that 91,074 military funerals were performed in 2000, a 110-percent increase over the 43,277 funerals performed in 1999.

Providing final honors for the nation's veterans is "the right thing to do," Abell said. "We asked them to put their lives on the line for the freedoms we all enjoy today. As they reach the end of their lives, the nation has a commitment to them, owes them an honor as they pass. For those who want that honor, we will provide it."

For more information about the program, and how to request such services, see the Military Funeral Honors website at www.militaryfuneralhonors.osd.mil. — *American Forces Press Service*